

**REMARKS:**

**REMARKS REGARDING AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWING:**

Entry of the included new Figure 1a is requested to provide consistency between the description and drawings. Figure 1a adds identifying numerals 9a and 13a to clarify structure without adding new matter to the invention that was presented originally by Figure 1.

**REMARKS REGARDING AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

Paragraphs [0039], [0040] and [0042] have been amended to add description of detail found in the drawings, particularly Figure 1. The added description does not introduce new matter but provides conforming text associated with features of the invention present in the original drawings. Now, the specification, along with the figures, provides antecedent basis for the presently claimed features of the invention.

**REMARKS REGARDING CLAIM AMENDMENTS:**

Please cancel claims 14 - 23 which have been previously withdrawn.

Claim 1 has been amended to overcome rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph to place claim 1 and dependent claims 2, 4 - 7 and 10 in condition for allowance. Claims 8 and 9 were canceled previously. Claims 1, 2, 4 - 7 and 10 are pending in the present application.

Following amendment of claim 1, request is respectfully made for reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 2, 4 - 7 and 10.

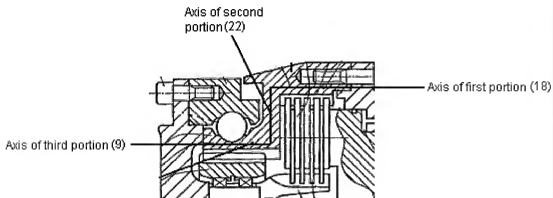
**IN RESPONSE TO THE OFFICE ACTION:**

Applicants understand the designation of the Office Action as a final action, but submit that its content prevents opportunity for simply amending or canceling claims. Further, applicants believe that one of ordinary skill in the art would appreciate structural and functional aspects of the present invention as previously claimed, without amendment. However, the Examiner's action indicates the need for amendment of both the specification and claims to place the application in condition for allowance. Having complied with the Examiner's suggestions, request is respectfully made for entry of this communication that is responsive to the Office Action of January 3, 2007 and that places the application in condition for allowance.

**IN THE SPECIFICATION**

According to the Office Action, the specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the subject matter recited in claim 1 as follows, "the second portion having an orthogonal relationship to the first portion and the third portion."

Paragraph [0039] has been amended to provide written antecedent basis in the specification by providing description of the positional relationships of the first portion, the second portion and the third portion as originally shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2 of the application. A portion of Figure 1, reproduced below, provides evidence showing the axes of the first, second and third portions, and that the second portion has an orthogonal relationship; i.e., is at right angles to the other two portions.





Comments in the Office Action relating to an “inner race” and “an outer race” have been interpreted to refer to “an outer surface having at least one race” and “an opposing race in an inner face.” Amendment of claim 1 to remove “at least” from the recitation of “an opposing race” is intended to clarify that one race aligns with an opposing race rather than suggest the presence of more opposing races.

The Office Action also asserts lack of antecedent basis in the disclosure for recitation in claim 1 of “adapted for secure connection to a hub from which the annular part extends to overlap the outer surface” for the reason that the term, “secure connection” lacked clarity.

Claim 1 has been amended by replacement of the phrase, “adapted for secure connection” with -- having integrated therein a fourth portion for mounting--. Paragraphs [0040] and [0042] provide support for the amendment.

The Office Action further addressed lack of antecedent basis in the disclosure for recitation in claim 1 of “the annular member providing a unitary assembly for directly connecting the hub to the axle case.”

Use of the term “unitary assembly” was derived from the description of original paragraph [0042] to recognize the annular member 20 as a holder for the planetary gear transmission 6, as a connector to the axle case 3, as a brake housing and pressure surface for the braking device 16, and as possessing a bearing unit 21 for mounting the wheel hub 12. The combination of elements represented a “unitary assembly” holding the hub 12 to the axle case 3. The intended representation may have been difficult to visualize, which led applicants to amend claim 1 to remove recitation of “unitary assembly.”

Applicants have made an earnest attempt to address all the points included in the Office Action and submit that amendment of the specification to add description of portions of the original drawing and amendment of claim 1 places the application in condition for allowance. Given the above, Applicant requests that the rejection of claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph be reconsidered and withdrawn and that the Examiner indicate the allowance of the claims 1, 2, 4 – 7 and 10 in the next paper from the Office.

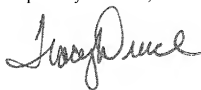
The undersigned representative requests any extension of time that may be deemed necessary to further the prosecution of this application.

Serial No.: 10/709,483  
Confirmation No.: 1684  
Applicants: KINGSTON, Timothy *et al.*  
Atty. Ref.: 7589.165.PCUS00

The undersigned representative authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees under 37 C.F.R. 1.16 or 1.17 that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 14-1437, referencing Attorney Docket No.: 7589.165.PCUS00.

In order to facilitate the resolution of any issues or questions presented by this paper, the Examiner may directly contact the undersigned by phone to further the discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tracy W. Druce". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tracy" and last name "Druce" clearly distinguishable.

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